CBC JAPAN

カトリック中央協議会
CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF JAPAN

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Prot. No.

Tokyo, 12th Dec. 1991

His Excellency
The Most Reverend Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo

Your Grace,

LETTER OF CONDOLENCE TO BISHOP BELO
REGARDING THE MASSACRE OF THE EAST TIMORESE BY THE INDONESIAN MILITARY

One month has already passed since the terrible massacre of a great number of East Timorese by the Indonesian National Forces which fired on thousands of East Timorese citizens gathered in Santa Cruz Cemetery for the purpose of offering flowers at the tomb of a fellow citizen who had been killed.

We, the Japanese Bishops, gathered for our Annual Assembly wish to express our great sorrow about this incident. We also wish to convey our heartfelt sympathies to you, Bishop Belo, who represent the East Timorese Catholic Church which is always so close to the people of East Timor.

On the 20th of November a press conference was held by Fr. Stefani Renato in the Office Building of the House of Representatives in Tokyo. Fr. Renato, a priest from Nagoya Diocese, was in Dili on the very day of the incident and during the conference, he told everything he witnessed and heard from the people. He stressed how cruel the incident was because the Military fired on unarmed and helpless citizens.

We hear that the starting point of this series of massacres was the killing of two young East Timorese at Motael Church. Many young people who demanded self-determination and were in danger of being arrested were under the protection of this Church. We wish that this right of self-determination which is a right of every nation and one that is guaranteed by the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should be given back to the East Timorese through appropriate ways and means.

We express our strong support of your demand for a referendum as presented by your Excellency to the Secretary General of the United Nations in February 1989.

According to the information we received, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar, expressed his intention to send some human rights specialists to investigate this massacre. We urge the United Nations to carry out a thorough investigation of this incident and do its best to find a total solution to the East Timor problem.

Japan occupied East Timor for three years and a half during the Second World War and destroyed its beautiful Cathedral. We remember this crime committed by our nation and sincerely repent of this action. Because of this sad history we feel a very strong solidarity with you. We wish that freedom will be established as soon as possible in East Timor and pray for you and your people that our Mighty Lord will help you all with his great strength.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+ Aloisius M. Soma
Bishop of Nagoya

+ Joseph S. Sadakane
Bishop of Takamatsu

+ Peter Baptist Shigemi
O.F.M. Cap.
Bishop of Naha

+ Petrus T. Hirayama
Episcopus Oitaensis

+ Paul Itonaga
Bishop of Kagoshima

+ F.X. Shimamoto
Archbishop of Nagasaki

+ Joseph A. Misue
Bishop of Hiroshima

+ Peter Shirayanagi
Archbishop of Tokyo

+ Raymundus M. C. Sato, o.p.
Episcopus Sendaiensis

+ Raymond K. Tanaka
Bishop of Kyoto

+ Joseph Matsunaga
Bishop of Fukuoka

+ Peter T. Shimoji
Bishop of Sapporo

+ Paulus Moji
Archiep. Tokyo

+ Peter T. Okada
Bishop of Urawa

+ Paul M. Yasuda
Archbishop of Oita

+ Franciscus K. Sako
Bishop of Niigata

+ Stylus J. Hamao
Bishop of Yokohama